

REMARKS

Claims 13-36 are pending. Claims 13, 18, and 26 have been amended to clarify what was previously described and Claims 33-36 have been added. Support for the amendments is included throughout the specification including Fig. 12 and paragraphs [0087]-[0104]. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration of the pending Claims is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Examiner Interview

Applicant thanks the Examiner, Youpaporn Nilanont, and the Examiner's Supervisor, Benjamin Bruckart (Primary Examiner) for the courtesies extended to Applicant's representative, Sanders N. Hillis (reg. no. 45,712), during the telephonic interview of May 4, 2010 in which Claims 13, 25, and 29 were discussed. U.S. Patent No. 6,842,773 to Ralston et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,421,709 to McCormick et al., and U.S. Patent No. 6,167,435 to Druckenmiller et al. were also discussed. During the discussion, it was agreed that none of the cited references taught each and every limitation of the pending claims. It was further agreed that further consideration and search would be needed following submission of the present response.

The Claim Rejections pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 13, 17-19, and 24-32 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of U.S. Patent No. 6,842,773 to Ralston (hereinafter "Ralston"), and U.S. Patent No. 6,421,709 to McCormick et al. (hereinafter

"McCormick"), and U.S. Patent No. 6,167,435 to Druckenmiller et al. (hereinafter "Druckenmiller").¹ In addition, Claims 14 and 22 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over the combination of Ralston, McCormick, Druckenmiller, and common knowledge in the art. Also, Claims 15 and 16 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over the combination of Ralston, McCormick, Druckenmiller, and U.S. Patent No. 6,868,498 to Katsikas. Further, Claims 20 and 21 were rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Ralston, McCormick, Druckenmiller and U.S. Patent No. 6,581,072 to Mathur et al. (hereinafter "Mathur"). Claim 23 was rejected pursuant to 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious in view of the combination of Ralston, McCormick, Druckenmiller, and U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0243844 A1 to Adkins (hereinafter "Adkins"). Applicant respectfully asserts that the cited references fail to teach or suggest each and every limitation of the presently pending claims, as discussed during the telephonic interview.

For example, Claim 13 describes that the relay apparatus is further configured to control the terminal station to communicate with the information provider to register the email address of the user of the terminal station as a recipient email address at the transmitting apparatus of the information provider identified with the identification information. Claim 13 also describes that the terminal station is further configured to transmit the received identification information of the information

¹ Claims 19 and 24 were not identified as rejected on page 3 of the office action, however, on page 7 of the office action claims 19 and 24 were rejected as obvious in view of the combination of Ralston, McCormick, and Druckenmiller.

provider over the first communication network, and a relay apparatus is configured to receive the identification information of the information provider transmitted from the terminal station over the first communication network, and store the received identification information in association with an email address of a user of the terminal station.

As discussed during the telephone interview, none of the cited references teach or suggest a relay apparatus configured to control the terminal station to communicate with the information provider to register the email address of the user of the terminal station as a recipient email address at the transmitting apparatus of an information provider identified with the identification information.

On page 5 of the office action, it was acknowledged that neither Ralston nor McCormick taught or suggested a relay apparatus configured to control the terminal station to communicate with the information provider to register the email address of the user of the terminal station as a recipient email address at the transmitting apparatus of an information provider identified with the identification information, and Druckenmiller was brought in to fill this gap in Ralston and McCormick.

However, as discussed during the telephone interview, Druckenmiller simply describes two-way communication between a primary system and a subscriber using a token to verify the identity of the subscriber prior to completing a registration process. (Col. 1 line 66-Col. 2 line 25) Druckenmiller further describes generation by the primary system of a unique token that is associated with an email address of a user upon receipt of a subscription request to join a mailing list. (Col. 2 lines 66-67 and Col. 3

lines 22-24) Druckenmiller's token is used to validate a subscription request of the user using an automated verification message to the user containing the token, and a confirmation message from the user that also includes the same token. Thus, as agreed during the telephone interview neither Ralston, McCormick nor Druckenmiller teach or suggest any form of relay apparatus configured to control a terminal station to communicate with an information provider as described in Claim 13.

Also, on pages 3 and 4 of the office action, it was asserted that Ralston described a relay apparatus configured to receive identification information of an information provider transmitted from a terminal station over a communication network, and store the received identification information in association with an email address of a user of the terminal station. As discussed during the telephone interview, Applicant respectfully traverses these assertions at least because the cited portion of Ralston simply describes that unsolicited email is filtered and sent to a bulk mail folder and other e-mail is sent by default to an inbox folder. (Col. 4 lines 54-56) Ralston also describes an approved list containing names of known entities that regularly send large amounts of solicited email to users. (Col. 4 lines 58-59) Ralston further describes that members are added to the approved list based on user complaints to a customer service representative that solicited emails are being stored in the bulk mail folder by mistake, or by an automated mechanism that adds names to the list, such as when a threshold amount of users complain about improper filtering. (Col. 4 line 66 – Col. 5 line 12) Thus, the cited portion of Ralston is wholly silent and unconcerned with receipt of any form of identification information of an information provider

transmitted from a terminal station over a communication network. Accordingly, neither Ralston, McCormick nor Druckenmiller, alone or in combination teach or suggest each and every limitation of Claim 13.

Applicant also respectfully traverses the rejections of Claims 14 and 22 at least because the features of Claims 14 and 22 are not "commonly known in the art" as has been asserted. Accordingly, pursuant to MPEP 2144.03(c), Applicant respectfully requests production of an authority to support the assertions in the office action regarding assignment of identification information as described in Claim 14, and making use of the relay apparatus as described in Claim 22, due to the lack of any indication of such limitations in the cited references and Applicant's lack of knowledge of such an authority. In addition, or alternatively, because the office action asserts facts that are not well known, and have no evidentiary support in the prior art, Applicant respectfully requests an affidavit from the Examiner to support these rejections. See MPEP 2144.04 and 37 C.F.R. 1.104(d)(2). Moreover, Applicant respectfully asserts that the features of Claim 22 are not taught or suggested by any of the cited references, or what is commonly known in the art. In fact, the office action does not assert that any of the cited references meet the limitations described in Claim 22, but rather simply disregards these limitations completely. Thus, it is respectfully requested that the rejection of Claim 22 be withdrawn as improper. (See MPEP 707 and 37 CFR §1.104(b) and 37 CFR §1.104(c))

In another example, Claim 25 describes a processor configured to direct the terminal station to transmit a request to register the email address of the user as a

recipient email address at a transmitting apparatus of the sender identified with the identification information. In addition, Claim 25 describes a relay apparatus that includes a first communication unit configured to receive identification information from a terminal station over a first communication network, the identification information identifying a sender of an email which a user of the terminal station wishes to receive; and a storage unit configured to store the identification information received by the first communication unit in association with an email address of the user of the terminal station. Neither Ralston, McCormick nor Druckenmiller teach or suggest such limitations. Instead, as previously discussed, Druckenmiller describes two way communication between a primary system and a subscriber using a token to verify the identity of the subscriber prior to registering (Col. 1 line 66-Col. 2 line 25), Ralston describes a manual system in which user complaints are used by a customer service representative to add to an approved list (Col. 4 line 66 – Col. 5 line 12), and McCormick simply describes email filtering.

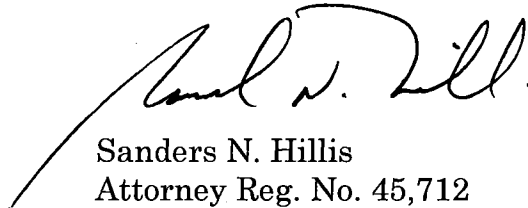
In still another example, the method of Claim 29 describes the relay device directing the terminal station to register with the information providing server to receive communications from the information providing server. The method of Claim 29 also describes the relay device receiving from the terminal station identification information of the information providing server, the identification information obtained by the terminal station from the information providing server. As discussed during the telephone interview, neither Ralston, McCormick, nor Druckenmiller alone or in combination teach or suggest such limitations. Instead, Druckenmiller is focused

on tokens and two-way communication, Ralston simply describes unsolicited emails and an approved list generated based on user complaints received by a customer service representative, and McCormick is wholly focused on email-filtering, as previously discussed. Thus, neither Ralston, McCormick nor Druckenmiller teach or suggest a relay device directing a terminal device to register, or a relay device receiving identification information of an information providing server from a terminal station, as described in Claim 29.

For at least the foregoing reasons, independent Claims 13, 25, and 29, and the respective claims dependent therefrom are not taught, suggested or disclosed by the cited references either alone or in combination. Accordingly, the application is now in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner deem a telephone conference to be beneficial in expediting examination and/or allowance of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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